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> LEADERSHIP

Turning Around Low Performing Schools

By Bill Gavaghan, IPLA Executive Director

With today's accountability laws and mandates, states and school districts are now faced for the first time with the threat of closing schools due to under-performance. Unfortunately, educational leaders, particularly at the middle and high school levels, have very few models available for turning around under-performing schools. Despite the limited number of restructuring choices, turnaround training for specialized leaders is one option that is gaining recognition as a special discipline in education that specifically targets the needs of low-performing schools. However, little research has been done on educational leaders as turnaround specialists and the effect of such turnaround interventions. Much of the existing research focuses on the general characteristics and behaviors school leaders of any high-performing school exhibit, whereas only a few of the studies specifically describe the distinguishing characteristics of school leaders who are successful in turning around low-performing schools.

The Center on Innovation and Improvement defines turnaround as "a documented, quick, dramatic and sustained change in the performance of an organization."¹ Much of the research is on successful turnaround leaders who come from public (non-education), nonprofit, and private sectors. Successful turnaround leaders can be identified by either the specific actions they take and/or by the behavioral characteristics and competencies that lead them to act in specific ways.

Research from The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement² comparing research from the private and public sectors suggest that turnaround leaders may need to exhibit the following competencies:

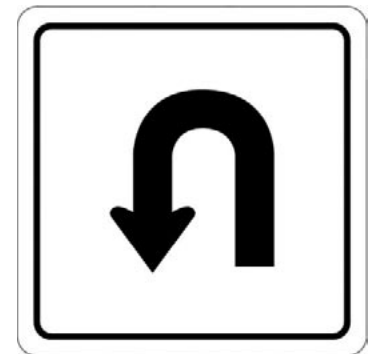
Driving for Results. Leaders set high goals, take initiative, and are persistent. They are able to make decisions even when unpopular.

Solving problems. Leaders gather and use data, think through problems and follow up with targeted action.

Influencing Others. Leaders are attuned to establishing credibility throughout the organization and working through others.

Teamwork and cooperation. Leaders ask for input from others and involve them in matters that affect them.

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Annette Breaux is a former classroom teacher and curriculum coordinator. She now serves as the Teacher Induction Coordinator for Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana. Annette also developed the FIRST Program, an induction program for new teachers hailed as one of the best in the country. The program has been so successful in training and retaining new teachers that the Louisiana Department of Education has adopted it as a statewide model.

**This is an RSVP event.
Seats are limited to the
first 50 to respond.**

Please complete the registration form and return it with a check or P.O. made out to the IPLA Alumni Association.

ANNETTE BREAUX

Teacher Induction Programs

April 15, 2008

8:30–11:30 AM for Secondary Administrators

1:15–3:30 PM for Elementary Administrators

**at the Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel & Suites,
Keystone at the Crossing**

Check one: ☐ Secondary – AM ☐ Elementary – PM

Please note that the secondary and elementary programs differ only slightly in content. Therefore, it is only necessary to choose one session to attend.

Name _____

First Name for Name Tag _____

Position: _____

School Name _____

School Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

School Phone (with area code) _____

Email (required): _____

Corp/Organization Name _____

Corporation Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Participant Registration

Registration

\$50

Your fee of \$50.00 will cover your registration and cost of food at break.

RSVP by March 28, 2008.

Mail or fax registration form to:

Maggie McGrann - IPLA

Room 229, State House

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Telephone: (317) 234-0331 Fax: (317) 232-9005

mmcgrann@doe.in.gov

Please check method of payment.

☐ Check # _____

☐ PO # _____

Make checks payable to:
IPLA Alumni Association



Indiana Principal Leadership Academy

IPLA+ Coaching Program

WHAT IS THE IPLA+ COACHING PROGRAM?

The IPLA+ Coaching Program is a part of an overall program designed to provide educational leaders with new knowledge for genuine individual, group and organizational transformation. Registration is open to all educators including assistant principals, principals, directors, and superintendents.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE FIVE-DAY PROGRAM ARE:

- Learn to serve others through coaching.
- Re-encounter your ability and passion for learning.
- Develop abilities that will give you mastery in living.

The cost of the five day program is \$400.

2008 REQUIRED TRAINING DATES

July 24-25, 2008 • November 13-14, 2008 • December 4, 2008

Trainings will be held at the Indiana Department of Education building at 151 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204. A light breakfast will be provided. Lunch will be on your own.

LARRY HUGGINS

Lawrence Huggins, of Huggins & Associates, is a professional facilitator and coach, specializing in organizational and team development, strategic planning, and conflict resolution. He teaches facilitation and communication skills, and the art of designing and facilitating effective meetings. He is certified as a facilitator in the discipline of the ontology of language, a powerful perspective for understanding and intervening in organization, viewing them as linguistic systems. Ontology addresses two major questions that have become pivotal for the long-term success of schools: "How can principals work together effectively and develop trust in working relationships?" and "How can we build a high performance and collaborative school?"

Registration Deadline – July 3, 2008. Refund Deadline – 2 business days prior to first session. Please mail or fax your name, position, school or organization name, address, email and phone number to Maggie McGrann - IPLA Room 229, State House, Indianapolis, IN 46204 Telephone: (317) 234-0331 Fax: (317) 232-9005. Please provide a P.O. # or send a check payable to IPLA Alumni Association.

> TEACHING & LEARNING

Classroom Walkthroughs

Towards a common understanding of the term

*by Debbie Fish, Director of Professional Learning,
Central Indiana Education Service Center*

One of the newer words added to the educational jargon in the last five years is classroom walkthrough (CWT). As educators, we talk about it as if we have a common understanding of the process and its purpose. However, having trained several hundred principals in Indiana using three different models, I know that clarification among principals, but more importantly with teachers, should have a high priority.



Being a professional allows a principal to implement CWT by adapting it to fit a particular school population. But there are some aspects of this process that my experience tells me should be consistent in order to maintain the fidelity of the process and for CWT to be an effective tool for school improvement.

#1 Do not use CWT for evaluation of individual teachers.

School corporations have a process for evaluating teachers and CWT should be a separate process. Classroom walkthroughs are for gathering data in all classrooms. CWT is a way to look at the teaching, but more importantly, a way to look at the learning and the learner's response to the teaching. This is a time for the principal to resist using the evaluative lens and instead collect data on what they see and hear in a classroom. It is not about judging whether it is good, bad or mediocre. This process allows the principal to be a mirror reflecting back to the teachers the teaching and learning going on in classrooms throughout the school.

Some principals struggle with the non-evaluative approach. This is understandable. We are a society that makes judgments from morning to night thinking the coffee is too strong, or the traffic is too heavy. Being non-evaluative and being intentional about the perspective taken when walking into a classroom requires a conscious effort.

#2 Share the data and allow teachers to look for trends and patterns.

Once data has been collected from many classrooms, it can be shared with teachers in graph form. Teachers can be asked to discuss what the data reveals and what trends or patterns might be emerging. If the principal tells the teachers what the data says and the trends or patterns she/he sees, then the teachers' perception could be that this is an evaluative process. Principals need to step back, let the data be on the table and be the focus. Teachers can then

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IPLA Profile

John Marsh, career educator with the New Albany-Floyd County School Corp. and currently serving as the principal of Floyd Central High School



What is your area of training? My undergraduate training was in language arts while the bulk of my graduate work has been in school administration and curriculum and instruction.

What was your IPLA experience like? I was very fortunate to become a part of IPLA as a facilitator with the Jim Bates Team for groups five and six in 1986. The Bates Team was the first facilitation team to do a full two year cycle with an Academy group. Since then I have been fortunate to serve on additional teams as a facilitator or team leader. Each time I benefited much more than I could give from talented and inspiring administrators from across the state. Each time I go to an Academy session I come away rejuvenated and with an even greater respect for the work principals do throughout the state of Indiana. I never leave a session without a renewed commitment for the work I am allowed to do with teachers, staff, and students. It keeps the faith alive.

What is your connection to IPLA? My connection to IPLA currently is serving as team leader for the Facilitation Team that provides team building experiences for new facilitation teams each summer in Brown County. I also serve on the Alumni Board of Directors.

How has IPLA benefited you and/or contributed to your professional life? Of all of my professional training experiences, IPLA has had the most profound daily impact upon my career. I was fortunate to become acquainted with IPLA very early in my career and it has taught me that all things are possible when you empower others to believe in the best that lies within each of us. Lifting up others through servant leadership and challenging ourselves to become better regardless of our

successes empowers all of us to achieve more every day and every year. "As good as we are, how can be better?" has become a daily challenge for all of us to become even more deliberate in practicing and improving our craft. The "IPLA Way" is about excellence through community and lifting up others.

What is your philosophy of education or leadership?

Institutional leadership, for me, is about vision, gate-keeping, and motivating community. More things are possible as a community than individuals. Gate-keeping protects culture and purpose while vision provides a sense of mission and direction for the community. Ultimately, the pursuit of an education should lead us towards some sense of enlightenment for what it means to be more fully human. As such, education is truly a life long journey.

What have you been doing? Floyd Central High School is beginning a substantial renovation program in early 2008. For the past year I have spent considerable time in the planning arena. I am an adjunct instructor at IU Southeast and a coach for IPLA.

What are you focusing on? Renovation will be a major undertaking for 2008 through 2010. School goals include improving subgroup scores for AYP, improving vertical articulation efforts in English nine and ten, and improving graduation success.

Something that you have done recently... Besides work? I just finished teaching a class at IU Southeast.

What is your favorite quote? All of us have many quotes we favor. One that I use with student groups frequently is from Margaret Mead. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." "It's a grand and glorious day on the planet Earth" is my favorite affirmation.

What are you reading at the moment? I just finished "What Got You Here Won't Get You There" by Marshall Goldsmith as part of a group study effort. I am finishing "Book of the Dead" by Patricia Cornwell.

(WALKTHROUGHS continued from page 1)

take the lead and feel ownership of the process. Starting with schoolwide data would allow for anonymity and provide the opportunity for teachers to reflect in a non-threatening environment.

#3 The dialogue is the most powerful part of the CWT process.

A principal needs to collect and share data with an objective frame of mind. The teachers may agree or refute what the data is saying. Teachers could argue that they are providing students with work at the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy, but the data says it is mostly at the lower levels and the principal just wasn't in the room at the right time. The meditative question

from the principal would then need to be: "In what ways do teachers provide learning experiences for students that require higher level thinking?" Teachers might then share lessons and student work samples that indeed are at those higher levels. This sharing raises the conscious competence of all teachers in providing work for students that requires higher levels of thinking.

Finally, effective implementation of a classroom walkthrough process truly is embedded, relevant professional learning and is the real collaborative work of a school. And isn't that the type of meaningful work we would all hope to be doing?



IPLA Update

by Mark Tobolski, Principal of Elkhart Memorial High School
IPLA Alumni Association Vice-President & Winter Conference Committee Chair

IPLA would like to thank everyone who attended the 18th Annual IPLA Alumni Association Winter Conference and for helping to make it a huge success.



The committee did a spoof of Dancing with the Stars and chose "Leading with the Stars" as evident with the conference keynotes Dr. Robert Marzano, who spoke about research-based practices for school improvement, and Mr. Clifton Taulbert, who spoke about the power of community and relationships.

The conference theme and content were based upon IPLA's vision of preparing principals to be instructional leaders that are empowered with effective behaviors, processes and proficiencies for continuous school improvement. Since IPLA has moved toward a standards-based curriculum and data-driven assessment, the Winter Conference Planning Committee carefully chose breakout sessions that advanced the vision and aligned with the curriculum. The Committee also chose breakout presentations so that everyone at all levels could return to their school districts and buildings with programs and practices that they could incorporate for immediate impact. This conference gave Indiana educators options to fit their particular needs as well as to support and validate what may already be in place.

The 18th Annual Winter Conference definitely met the IPLA vision, goals and purpose as evidenced by the numerous accolades given to the staff by many participants. The conference once again proved to be a perfect venue for professional networking, sharing and collegiality which ultimately will help all students become successful. I would like to sum up the conference using the words of many participants, "This was a great conference and will be hard to top next year." We accept the challenge and hope to see you next year at the 19th Annual IPLA Alumni Association Winter Conference at which Dr. Mike Schmoker will keynote.

The Taiwan Principal Leadership Training Project

During the week of October 15-20, 2007, a delegation of 22 principals and 3 university faculty from Taiwan visited Indiana for professional development, leadership training and international exchange through the Taiwan Principal Leadership Training Project. The project resulted from a 2005 Memorandum of Understanding that the Indiana Department of Education and the Taiwan Ministry of Education signed to promote educational exchanges for principals, teachers and students between Indiana and Taiwan. The Indiana Department of Education's Office of International Education and the IPLA facilitated the project in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Cultural Division, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago.

The Taiwanese delegation learned about education in Indiana through various workshops and schools visits. They visited the Center for Inquiry and the Crispus Attucks Medical Magnet School in Indianapolis Public Schools; New Britton Elementary and Fishers High School in Hamilton Southeastern Schools; Southside Elementary and Central Middle School in Columbus; and Franklin Community High School in Franklin Community School Corporation. The delegation was also able to visit various Indiana businesses, organizations and attractions. One of the visit highlights was the evening spent at home with an Indiana host. University professors, Li-hua Chen and Feng-min Wang, recount their experience in Indiana below. What a wonderful time it was!

FAR BEYOND MY EXPECTATIONS

By Dr. Feng-min Wang

Associate Professor & Director of the Foreign Language Teaching and Training Center Applied English Institute, National Taiwan Ocean University

Far beyond my expectations! I was amazed by the great hospitality we received in Indiana and the high quality of the program offered by the Indiana State Department of Education. Within the six days in Indiana, we were given quite a holistic picture of the educational system from policies to practices at all levels, through presentations and visiting schools and organizations. The dialogues with specialists from different fields in the conference rooms, at meal tables and even parking lots, made my heart deeply touched. I did not see the high boundaries of different cultures and systems, but had a feeling that we all belonged to a world community of education, caring about human values and struggling with the same things.

Among the enjoyable activities, I was excited most about visiting the School for Inquiry. An increasing number of educators and teachers in Taiwan are seeking to create opportunities for inquiry-based learning and teaching at some levels and in some areas of the curriculum. Some of them have started to take their students out to get knowledge in their communities through interviews and observational notes, while others might still rely on reproducing

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(TAIWAN continued from page 5)

texts from textbooks, encyclopedias, newspapers, and journals. The concerns of students' safety and time consumed are two major factors that make teachers hesitate over doing that. No matter what sources we like to use, learning from each other helps teachers develop their own strategies to encourage students to ask questions and to seek answers themselves rather than passively accepting someone else's judgment about what they should know. There is no such school curriculum with the inquiry-oriented practices across all subjects in Taiwan yet. The visit to the Center of Inquiry School in Indianapolis was not only a good memory but also a reminder of brave innovation.

Our trip to Indiana is finished. However, more thinking and dialogues have just begun. With the foundation of good friendship and mutual understanding with the State of Indiana, our conversations will go on with a global view.

ELABORATE COURSE DESIGN TOUCHES HEARTS

By *Li-hua Chen*

Professor, Taipei Municipal University of Education

It was honorable for me to be a delegate of Taiwan Principal Leadership Training Project during Oct.14-19, 2007. I was very impressed by the courses, which were provided by the brilliant and thoughtful officials of Indiana Department of Education. Following are some of the features that touched me most.

1. Holistic course design

The project provided a holistic picture of the Indiana public education system, ranging from policies to practices at all levels through various activities such as lectures, discussion, visiting schools and social organizations related to education. All the schools we visited appeared fantastic professionally; for example, the Crispus Attucks School demonstrates a faithful and reflective attitude toward the history about the practices of segregation policy in their museum. The exhibition becomes a valuable heritage of human rights and education. Indianapolis Public Schools' efforts to reform Crispus Attucks to be Medical Magnet School so that urban students may get more and better educational opportunities are wonderful.

2. Humanistic and hospitable arrangement

There were some considerate arrangements in the courses. For example, at the main gate of the Center of Inquiry, there was a welcome map which marked the relative location between Indiana and Taiwan! You can image what a brilliant teaching idea it was and it also made every delegate feel at home!

Informal interaction worked to break the ice boundary among people. I enjoyed the talking and sharing at the meal table, in the small group discussion or along the way to a school visit. The visit to the home of an Indiana host was the climax of all the informal contacts. I will always remember the laughing, talking and friendship flowing at the home of Dr. Deb Lecklider who hosted me and three other delegates. I also cannot forget the tears rolling on and overflowing out of our folks' eyes while the delegates were sharing news of their hometown.



Dr. Feng-min Wang and Li-hua Chen at Conner Prairie

3. Intellectual and professional experience

Visiting the Central Office of Bartholomew County Consolidated Schools was a brand new and vivid experience for me. I was very interested in the budget of the school district, teacher recruitment, principal appointment, and textbook adoption. Even though we did not stay long enough to get to some of these issues, some of the lectures at the meeting room of IDOE were responsive to my curiosity the next day.

I was also very interested in the lecture on ISTEP which are very systematic and elaborate. The past ten years in Taiwan we have initiated a curricula reform. At the moment, it is time to set up an evaluation system to figure out students' progress. I believe Taiwan can learn some lessons from ISTEP.

4. Exciting and educational activities.

I was very fond of visiting the Eiteljorg Museum, the Children's Museum, Conner Prairie, and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. I had good time exploring the exciting activities in the museums, especially experiencing the simulated activities of early history in Conner Prairie. At the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, I almost felt the speed of races, the glory of the winners, and the cheers of the audience. The best part was the surprising gift from Deb Taylor of the media center. At the moment, I totally sensed that Cathy Blitzer, Coordinator of International Education at the Indiana Department of Education, is a genius of public relations. She applied so many resources to enrich our experience in the Training Project.

5. Hosts, partners and friends forever

In the final section, I would like to express my grateful heart to the distinguished officials in Indiana Department of Education. Dear Dr. Reed, Phyllis, Kathy, Bill and Susan. You played excellent and perfect roles during our stay. As hosts, you let us feel honored in the welcome reception and every event we had together. As partners, you worked extremely effectively to arrange, to execute and even to evaluate the project! As friends, you take turns to be along with us, helping out all the learning and daily problems. Although back in Taiwan, I do not feel any physical distance among us while I contact Susan by e-mail. We sincerely welcome you all to Taiwan next April. I believe we will have a lot to learn from each other.



BOOKS FOR LEADERS

Leadership from the Inside Out

by Kevin Cashman

Book Review by Randy Greenwell, Performing Arts Department Chair at Laurence Central High School, and a member of Cohort Group 26 in Butler University's Experiential Program for Preparing School Principals (EPPSP).

If your New Year's Resolution for 2008 includes personal and professional development as a school leader, then I believe you will find Kevin Cashman's book to be a fun and easy read. At the suggestion of the author, you can take your time reading this one; "savor it as you would a walk with an old friend," Cashman encourages.

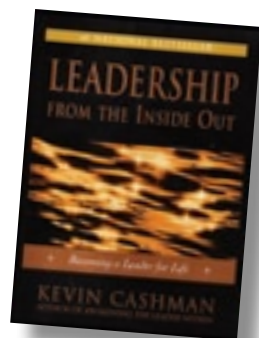
The book focuses on leadership development as an interpersonal experience. It is designed for readers to discover things about themselves that will help make them better people, and ideally, better leaders. Because the book is structured as an experience, there are places at the end of each section for the reader to write down or reflect on key thoughts and concepts. On days when one feels like skimming the chapters there are plenty of insightful quotes to experience as well.

Cashman terms his book a "wake-up call" to remind us that our ability to grow as a leader is based on our ability to grow as a person. He helps the reader foster this personal awakening by dividing the journey into seven interrelated pathways:

- Personal Mastery-Leading through Authentic Self-Expression
- Purpose Mastery-Leading by Expressing Our Gifts to Create Value
- Change Mastery-Leading in the Flow
- Interpersonal Mastery-Leading Through Synergy
- Being Mastery-Leading Through Being
- Balance Mastery-Leading By Centering Our Life
- Action Mastery-Leading as a Whole Person

The end of each chapter includes several questions for the reader to reflect and focus on. They are designed to serve as a call to action, for it is only through action that true self-change and growth can take place. Each pathway is highlighted with some real-life corporate experiences that can easily be applied to the educational profession. As I read further into the book, I began to realize the growth I was experiencing from Cashman's concepts could transfer into my approach as an educational leader in my building. Furthermore, I began to see how developing educational leaders within a school faculty, who share a common language about growth and transformation, would ultimately help the school meet their strategic goals.

Perhaps Cashman says it best when he states in the closing moments of his book, "organizations that invest as proactively in people development as they do in business development will thrive in the coming millennium." The same could be said for the business of educating the young people we see every day.



(TURN AROUND continued from page 1)

Analytical Thinking. Leaders think logically about influence strategies, the short and long term consequences of various situations, likely obstacles and the steps to achieve a goal.

Conceptual Thinking. Leaders identify patterns and connections between situations and to identify key issues in complex situations.

Team Leadership. Leaders have the ability and the willingness to assume the role as a leader of a team or group.

Communicating a Vision. Leaders communicate a compelling vision of the organization's future goals and plan.

Organizational Commitment. Leaders align their own behavior with the needs and goals of the organization.

Principals trained as turnaround specialists are presently working in many schools throughout the country and are showing positive results. The Leaders in Education Program at the University of Virginia offers turnaround education and training for individuals and teams. Twelve of the eighteen schools where turnaround specialists trained by the University of Virginia are working either made AYP or saw at least a 10% reduction of failure rates in reading or math for a 67% rate of success. Future studies will be needed to see if this success is sustained over a number of years or when the turnaround specialist leaves the school for another position.

I recommend reading "It's Being Done" Academic Success in Unexpected Schools by Karin Chenoweth to learn more about under-performing schools that have become successful.

Endnotes

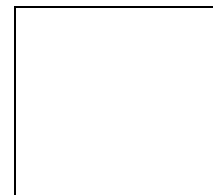
1 Center on Innovation and Improvement. (2007). School turnaround: A review of the cross-sector evidence on dramatic organizational improvement. Lincoln, IL.

2 The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. (2005). School restructuring options under no child left behind: What works when? Turnaround with new leaders and staff. Washington, D.C.



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Indiana Principal Leadership Academy

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2008

Feb. 1–Apr. 25 IPLA Alumni Association Aspiring Principal
Scholarship Applications accepted at
www.doe.state.in.us/ipla

Apr. 15–16 IPLA Academy Groups 43 & 44
Session at Sheraton Hotel
and Suites, Keystone at the Crossing

Apr. 17 IPLA Academy Group 43 Graduation at
Sheraton Hotel and Suites
Keystone at the Crossing

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